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U.S. GENERAL RUNS QUIET LAOS TEAM

Pentagon Denies He Exists. but American in Mufti Is Training Royal Troops

> By JACK RAYMOND special to The New York Times ASHINGTON.

Wahtever successes the Loatian Covernment has scored in battles with the pro-Communist Pathet Lao forces can be attributed in large part to effect tive training by a special United States unit headed by a colorful West Pointer ricknamed "the Prussian," qualified sources said today.

The Prussian is John Arnold Heintges, 48 years old, the key figure in a somewhat mysterious story of the United States military aid program to: the embattled Southeast Aman' kingdom.

Under the 1954 Geneva truce accords, only France was per-, mitted to have a military advisory group in Laos. The United States, therefore, established a "program evaluation; office." More than 100 technicians were sent to teach the Lactians how to maintain and use United States military equipment.

A. U. S. 'Non-Person'

The Americans instruct the Lactions on how to fire their carbine and machine guas, how to drive jeeps and trucks, how to build bridges and how to conduct close-order drill They must leave instruction in tactics and strategy to the French.

What is puzzling about the assignment of the head of the United States group to Laos is that he could be dead, perhaps never have existed, insofar as official Army records are concerned.

It appears that John Arnold, Heintges is the United States equivalent of a Soviet "moon-person" This term was used person " by the author George Orwell to describe individuals dropped from Soviet encyclopedias and histories when their existence past or present proved embar-rassing to the Kremiin

busjadier general. The new was listed in the official Army Registers from 1936. Use year of his graduation from West Point, through 1958 But his name does not appear in the 1959 or 1960

Regulers Moreover, no one at the Pentagon can be found who will acknowledge knowing despite the fact that his assignment to Laos is known.

General Heintges has been described as a tall, lean, tough infantryman who served with distinction in the Third Division in Italy and France during World War II. He has a scar

on his check that looks like a Heidelberg ducling scar but came from a swimming pool fall.

He was born in Coblenz, Ger-German officer, was killed in have been a familiar sight at World War I. His widowed army camps near Vientiane.

Young Heintges was an rades to his Laos assignment. "Army brat." His stepfather They call him "Mister." served in Alaska and various. The official United States posts in the United States. His Government explanation of the: nickname was given to General duties of the members of the Heintges at West Point; it is Program Evaluation Office is believed that he comes from a niclans. But there has been no

Wounded in World War II

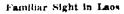
He was graduated, commissioned and married on the same day, June 14, 1936. He and his the State Department, wite, the former Betty Chaphave three Lovejoy. children. Their home address is believed to be Fort McKinley,

In World War II General Heintges was wounded in the heavy fighting in Italy. He later rejoined his unit for front-line cy, which presumably has its action in Southern France.

After the ar his assign- scene. ments included serving with the military advisory group at-tached to the West German Government's new-born military forces. It is said that, although he has spoken German fluently since he was a child, he took a refresher course before reporting in Bonn

His official biography at the Pentagon does not indicate when he became a brigadier general, although it was pre-sumably when he took command of Fort Dix in January,

General Heintges' record appears to end in August, 1958, when he was ordered to report to the Eighth Army in Seoul, Korea, the following January.



STATINTL

The general has not been in hiding He and his men, wearing civilian clothes frequently many, in 1912. His father, a casual stacks and sport jackets

mother, also a German, married Many of the men bear tatoos Capt. Kie Doty, who served in such as "Third Infantry Forthe United States army of occu- ever" on their forearms. The pation and afterward rose to general appears to have the rank of colonel.

long hac of Prussian officers, explanation why the record of General Heintges has been expunged, or of why the mention of his name in print seems to embarrass the Pentagon and;

The members of his staff are. said to be "retired Army men," but many of them, like General Heiniges, no longer have

their names on Army lists.
Persons in a position to know say they are not assigned to the Central Intelligence Agenown representatives on the **CPYRGHT**

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